Missouri Department of Natural Resources
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Missouri Status on Implementation of the Fine Particulate Standard

Air Pollution Control Program fact sheet 5/2003

In 1997, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced two standards for fine particulate. Fine particulate (PM2.5) includes all particulate matter 2.5 microns in diameter or smaller. Fine particulates can contribute to premature death, increased hospital admissions and emergency visits, especially for the elderly and individuals with respiratory illnesses.

EPA has asked Missouri to determine the State's PM2.5 nonattainment boundaries in order for EPA to make the final PM2.5 designations by Dec. 15, 2004. The deadline for Missouri to submit an initial recommendation to EPA is Feb. 15, 2004.

Missouri has been collecting PM2.5 air monitoring data for several years. The St. Louis area is the only geographic area of the state that has a violation of the new annual PM2.5 standard, with only one monitor showing a violation. Other monitors in the St. Louis metropolitan area have monitored values relatively close to the annual standard. There are several monitors in Illinois that have shown violations of the standard as well, so Illinois will also be making PM 2.5 nonattainment boundary recommendations.

EPA has issued guidance on how to determine PM2.5 nonattainment boundaries and has encouraged states to use metropolitan area boundaries so that population density, commuting patterns and commercial development can all be considered when evaluating the nonattainment designation. EPA is also recommending that states consider using the same boundaries as the eight-hour ozone boundaries. This is because many of the same sources contribute to both pollutant problems, and also because it simplifies the planning activities.

Because of this, Missouri is beginning to review the technical information concerning boundary placement. Once Missouri has made an eight-hour boundary recommendation, staff plans to use this eight-hour boundary as a starting point in evaluating a PM2.5 nonattainment boundary.

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